



Extrait du Worldwide Movement for Human Rights

<https://www.fidh.org/en/region/europe-central-asia/turkey/Turkey-Release-on-bail-of-Mr-Ragip>

# Turkey: Release on bail of Mr. Ragip Zarakolu / Ongoing arbitrary detention of Ms. Büsra Ersanli

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**New information**

**TUR 003 / 1111 / OBS 121.1**

**Release / Arbitrary detention /**

**Judicial harassment**

**Turkey**

April 11, 2012

The Observatory for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders, a joint programme of the International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH) and the World Organisation Against Torture (OMCT), has received new information and requests your urgent intervention in the following situation in **Turkey**.

**New information:**

The Observatory has been informed by reliable sources about the release on bail of Mr. **Ragıp Zarakolu**, Honorary Board Member and Founder of the Human Rights Association (Onsan Hakları Derneği - OHDA), Director of the Belge Publishing House and Chairman of the Publishers Association Freedom to Publish Committee of Turkey, and the ongoing arbitrary detention of Ms. **BÜSRA ERSANLI**, a lecturer at the Marmara University (Istanbul) Faculty of Political Sciences and International Relations who has been engaged with NGOs for political rights of the women.

According to the information received, on April 10, 2012, the Istanbul Heavy Penal Court No. 15 ordered the release on bail of Mr. Ragıp Zarakolu.

The Observatory recalls that the latter had been arrested in Istanbul on October 28, 2011, together with Ms. BÜSRA ERSANLI, as part of a vast anti-terrorist operation intended to dismantle part of an alleged terrorist network - the Kurdish Communities Union (KCK) - that in fact targeted more than 193 peaceful activists who are not related to any terrorist activities for their opinion on the Kurdish issue (See background information).

As of issuing this Urgent Appeal, Ms. Ersanli remains detained at the Bakırköy closed prison for females.

On April 3, 2012, the court accepted the indictment order and set July 2, 2012 at the Silivri Prison Complex for the first hearing of the case. Mr. Zarakolu now faces up to 15 years of prison on charges of "knowingly and willingly helping an organised criminal group" under Article 220/7 of the Turkish Penal Code (TPC) and Ms. Ersanli up to 22 and a half years of prison on charges of "belonging to a criminal organisation" under Article 314 of the TPC.

The Observatory welcomes the release on bail of Mr. Ragıp Zarakolu and thanks all the persons, institutions and organisations who intervened in his favour. However, it denounces the ongoing arbitrary detention of Ms. BÜSRA ERSANLI as well as the judicial harassment against the two human rights defenders, and calls upon the Turkish authorities to put an end to the continuing harassment against them, which seems to only aim at sanctioning their human rights activities.

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The Observatory further recalls that several OHD members remain today in pre-trial detention, notably Mr. Muharrem Erbey, OHD General Vice Chairperson and Chairperson of its Diyarbakir Province branch who had been detained since December 2009, Mr. Arslan Özdemir and Ms. Roza Erdede, OHD members in Diyarbakir, as well as lawyers, trade unionists, journalists and members of associations of families of victims of abusive anti-terrorism policies. Dozens of other human rights defenders also remain in provisional release pending the outcome of criminal trials on alleged terrorism charges.

### **Background information:**

On October 28, 2011, Mr. Ragip Zarakolu and Ms. Büsra Ersanli were both arrested in Istanbul as part of a vast operation that targeted more than 48 activists, mostly Kurdish political activists and particularly members of the Peace and Democracy Party (BDP). On November 1, 2011, the two were officially charged with "being a member of an illegal organisation", namely the KCK - an organisation said to be the "urban branch" of the armed Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) - under Article 314 of the TPC by Istanbul Heavy Penal Court No. 14.

### **Actions requested:**

- i. Guarantee in all circumstances the physical and psychological integrity of Mr. Ragip Zarakolu and Ms. Büsra Ersanli, as well as Mr. Muharrem Erbey, Mr. Arslan Özdemir and Ms. Roza Erdede as well as all human rights defenders in Turkey;
- ii. Release Ms. Büsra Ersanli, as well as Mr. Muharrem Erbey, Mr. Arslan Özdemir and Ms. Roza Erdede as well as all other human rights defenders, immediately and unconditionally since their detention is arbitrary as it only aim at sanctioning their human rights activities;
- iii. Put an end to all acts harassment, including at the judicial level, against Mr. Ragip Zarakolu and Ms. Büsra Ersanli, as well as Mr. Muharrem Erbey, Mr. Arslan Özdemir and Ms. Roza Erdede as well as all human rights defenders in Turkey;
- iv. Comply with the provisions of the United Nations Declaration on Human Rights Defenders, especially its Article 1, which states that "everyone has the right, individually and in association with others, to promote and to strive for the protection and realisation of human rights and fundamental freedoms at the national and international levels", as well as Article 12.2, which provides that "the State shall take all necessary measures to ensure the protection by the competent authorities of everyone, individually and in association with others, against any violence, threats, retaliation, de facto or de jure adverse discrimination, pressure or any other arbitrary action as a consequence of his or her legitimate exercise of the rights referred to in the present Declaration" ;
- v. More generally, ensure in all circumstances the respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms in accordance with international and regional human rights instruments ratified by Turkey.

### **Addresses:**

• President of Turkey, Mr. Abdullah Gül, Cumhurbaşkanlığı 06100 Ankara, Turkey; Fax: +90 312 468 5026; Email: cumhurbaşkanligi@tccb.gov.tr

• Prime Minister, Mr. Recep Tayyip Erdogan, Office of the Prime Minister Başbakanlık 06573 Ankara, Turkey, Fax: + 90 312 417 0476; reeptayyip.erdogan@basbakanlik.gov.tr

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- Deputy Prime Minister Responsible for Human Rights, Mr. Be\_ir Atalay, Email : [besir.atalay@tbmm.gov.tr](mailto:besir.atalay@tbmm.gov.tr), Fax: 00 90 (312) 422 13 98
- Interior Minister, Mr. Idris Naim ^ahin, 06644 Ankara, Turkey; Fax: + 90 312 418 17 95 / +90 312 418 7696,
- Justice Minister, Mr. Sadullah Ergin, Ministry of Justice/ Adalet Bakanligi, 06659 Ankara, Turkey; Fax: + 90 312 414 62 26
- Foreign Minister, Mr. Ahmed Davudoglu , Office of the Prime Minister, Basbakanlik, 06573 Ankara, Turkey; Fax: +90 312 287 88 11
- Ambassador, Mr. O uz Demiralp, Permanent Mission of Turkey to the United Nations in Geneva, Ch. du Petit-Saconnex 28b - CP 271, CH-1211, Geneva 19, Switzerland, E-mail : [mission.turkey@ties.itu.int](mailto:mission.turkey@ties.itu.int), Fax: +41 22 734 08 59
- Ambassador, Mr. Selim Kuneralp, Diplomatic Mission of Turkey to the European Union in Brussels, Avenue des Arts 36-38, 1000 Bruxelles, Belgium, Fax: + 32 2 511 04 50.

Please also write to the embassies of Turkey in your respective country.

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Paris-Geneva, April 11, 2012

Kindly inform us of any action undertaken quoting the code of this appeal in your reply.

To contact the Observatory, call the emergency line:

- \* E-mail: [Appeals@fidh-omct.org](mailto:Appeals@fidh-omct.org)
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